

# Help is Available

The pain and suffering experienced by a victim of violent crime cannot be measured. Recovering from such tragedy emotionally and financially is equally difficult, but there is help. As a victim you have rights; but you must assume the responsibility of learning about the trial process, including what happens after the conviction of an offender and how it affects your safety and well-being.

In an effort to alleviate hardships suffered by victims of crime, the Alabama Legislature passed the **Alabama Crime Victims Compensation Law** in 1984. The Commission provides financial compensation to cover expenses related to the crime such as: funeral costs, and medical and counseling expenses.

There is help for victims like you, and you are encouraged to become involved in the offender justice process. While you have the right to be provided with information, you must assume the responsibility of dealing with the crime by determining how it affects you now and in the future.

## Prison Release Program

In addition to serving time in prison, offenders may be placed on supervised release programs to serve the remainder of the sentence. These programs have been established with the goal of rehabilitating offenders into working, law-abiding citizens. Several options include:

### **Work Release**

Offenders are often allowed to work in the community in a variety of settings during the day, and return to a facility each night. The salary earned can enable the offender to pay child support, attorney's fees, court ordered restitution to the victim and other expenses. When work release is granted, the Department of Corrections notifies the sentencing judge and the district attorney who handles the case.

### **Pre-Discretionary Leave (PDL)**

Leave is granted to offenders for educational purposes or parole requirements. They must have a

Parole date set within six months of being placed on Pre-Discretionary Leave. The Department of Corrections Commissioner determines whether an offender remains on Pre-Discretionary Leave (PDL).

### **Passes or Furloughs**

A pass or furlough allows brief periods of time away from prison and is granted to offenders for good behavior.

### **Supervised Intensive Restitution**

Offenders are provided the opportunity to serve their sentence at home and can work to pay court costs, attorneys' fees, restitution to victims and other expenses.

### **Pardon and Parole**

Currently in Alabama two parole boards, consisting of three members each, grant or deny parole requests. After an offender has served at least 10 years of life expectancy or one-third of the sentence, a parole can be granted. A parole is granted by a majority vote of the board. However, the parole board has the authority to grant a parole to an offender at any time by a unanimous vote. When an offender is near the end of his/her sentence, he or she may refuse parole and serve the entire sentence to avoid supervision.

A pardon restores the offender's full civil rights including voting privileges and the right to hold office. An offender can apply for a pardon immediately after end of sentence or three years after parole. If a pardon is denied, the offender must wait one year before reapplying.

## End of Sentence

The end of sentence (EOS) is the date set by statute based on the sentence imposed by the courts, and is the date the Department of Corrections must release a offender.

Alabama law permits "good time" credits to be given to offenders for good behavior. These credits affect the calculation of the end of sentence date which is set at the time of sentencing. The length of time an offender serves can be lessened for "good behavior." At the end of sentence, an offender is free to move where he or she chooses. Victims have just cause to be concerned about an offender's release.

# Your rights

As of January 1, 1996, and for crimes occurring after that date, you as the victim, or a family member of the victim have a constitutional right to be notified of certain changes in writing by the Department of Corrections, provided you have made your request known to that department.

You Shall:

- be notified of an end of sentence release within 15 days prior to the end of the offender's sentence
- be notified within 15 days following the offender's death
- be notified as soon as practicable of the offender's escape, and recapture
- You also have the right to submit a written statement, or oral transcription to the Department of Corrections, and have your statement considered should your offender be reviewed for a community release program.

Every precaution is taken to keep your request confidential. However, the current addresses of victims are maintained on file and it is within the offender's rights to have access to any information in the Department of Corrections' file.

## Start the Healing Process

The crime that has been committed against you or your family member has changed your life forever. Start the healing process by calling the Alabama Crime Victims Compensation Commission in Montgomery at (334) 290-4420 or the resources listed in this brochure for answers to your questions.

## Correctional Facilities

Correctional facilities are located throughout Alabama. A convicted offender may be sent to a maximum, medium or minimum security prison facility. The Department of Corrections is the agency which determines where a prisoner will be placed. Inmates sentenced to death row or life without parole, as well as inmate who are considered security risks are sent to a maximum security prison. All other inmates are sent to medium or minimum security prisons.

## Answering Your Questions

Following conviction, the offender who committed the crime against you or your family member can be ordered by the sentencing judge to serve time in prison. There are sentencing options available to the courts, and the Department of Corrections must abide by those options to manage the offender and the prison population. The following state agencies including the Crime Victims Compensation Commission can answer your questions and provide you with specific information about the offender who victimized you:

**Alabama Crime Victims Compensation Commission**  
P.O. Box 231267  
Montgomery, AL 36123-1267  
(334) 290-4420  
(800) 541-9388  
[www.acvcc.alabama.gov](http://www.acvcc.alabama.gov)

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RESOURCES

**Department of Corrections**  
1400 Lloyd Street  
Montgomery, AL 36107  
(334) 242-9400

**Attorney General's Office of Victims Assistance**  
11 South Union Street  
Montgomery, AL 36130-0152  
(334) 242-7342  
(800)-626-7676

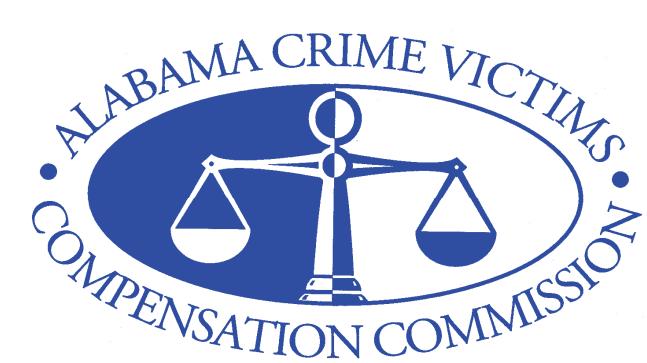
**Board of Pardons and Paroles**  
500 Monroe Street  
Lurleen B. Wallace Building  
P.O. Box 302405  
Montgomery, AL 36130-2405  
(334) 242-8700

Your local district attorney or sheriff can also assist you. You can find a listing for those offices in your local telephone directory.

# Alabama Crime Victims Compensation Commission

P. O. Box 231267  
Montgomery, Alabama 36123-1267  
Phone (334) 290-4420  
1-800-541-9388 (Victims only)  
FAX (334) 290-4455

Commission Members  
Barbara Brown  
Miriam Shehane



# AFTER THE TRIAL The Corrections Process

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Alabama Crime Victims Compensation Commission